

PRESS RELEASE

Wenham Water Commissioners
July 2007

The Wenham Water Commissioners announce the required implementation of mandatory state-imposed restrictions that limit nonessential outside water use to hand held hoses. Hand held hoses can only be used between the hours of 5 pm to 9 am, when lawn and garden watering is most effective. This ban prohibits sprinklers, irrigation systems, pool filling, car washing and all other nonessential outside water uses. These restrictions are mandated by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (Mass DEP) because flows in the Ipswich River have been below 52.5 cubic feet per second for three consecutive days at the USGS stream gauge in Ipswich. This flow level has been determined to be the minimum for a healthy river, and nonessential outside water use may threaten the river further. Historically, the Ipswich River reaches its lowest flow levels during summer, then returns to more normal levels in the Fall. If that trend continues -- and with residents' compliance with the state-mandated water restrictions -- levels will exceed the Mass DEP trigger level and this nonessential outside watering ban will be modified.

In addition, the use of private wells for nonessential uses is prohibited by Mass DEP, as withdrawals from private wells impact water levels in the Ipswich River as well.

Per chapter XXI of the Town of Wenham Bylaws, violators of these restrictions are subject to fines of \$50.00 for the first offence and \$100.00 for second and subsequent offences.

The Water Department appreciates the Town's cooperation. Please call Water Superintendent Bruce Blanchard at (978)468-5531 with any questions.